Plate No. 7.

BUFFALO HUNT. A NUMEROUS GROUP.

In this plate is represented a number of the accidents of the chase, with all of which the sportsman in that country will soon become acquainted. There is also seen here another variety of the "rolling" prairie; and the effect of the Indian's deadly weapons forcibly displayed; likewise a party of Indians dashing amongst a herd of buffaloes in a ravine, from which they are "breaking" in various directions; and men, horses, and buffaloes are meeting the accidents and alternatives here represented, which are familiar in the country. In the midst of precisely such a scene I was thrown, in a desperate chase by a party of Sioux Indians, near the mouth of the Teton River, on the Upper Missouri.

The buffalo is a harmless and timid animal until severely wounded, or closely pursued, when it often turns upon horse and rider with great rage and shocking disaster, unless a sudden escape can be made from its relentless fury. When closely pursued by the horse, and held a little too long in familiar company, the bull will often suddenly wheel around, receiving horse and rider on his horns, at the imminent hazard of the limbs and lives of both.

In this group is seen the position and expression of the Indian and the buffalo, at the moment the arrow has been thrown and buried to the feather in the animal's side. In the front of the picture, the wounded bull is seen dying, whilst wreaking his vengeance upon the horse; and on the left, another bull goring the horse of his assailant, who is forced from his seat and obliged to pass over the backs of several animals, which is often the case when they are running in numerous and confused masses. In this instance is seen the blade of the arrow protruding from the wound on the opposite side of the animal to that where it entered, one of the frequent occurrences of the kind, illustrating the great force with which the Indian's arrows are occasionally sent, passing entirely through the animal's body. I have been familiar with these hunting scenes of the Indians for several years, and have sometimes, for months together, almost daily, joined in them myself, when I have beheld many hundreds of them slain. I have several times seen the Indian gallop his horse around, and, leaning from its side, snatch his arrow from the ground, half buried in the earth, and covered with blood, having passed through the animal's heart on its way.

The numerous results which I have closely studied, of the deadly effects of the arrow, have fully convinced me that, in the hand of a skilful hunter on horseback, at the little distance the arrow is required to be thrown, the bow is a far more efficient weapon than the best firearm that could be produced. The aim is as true, the shots can be six or eight to one, and I venture to say that each shall be fully equal and more certain of securing the animal. I know, from experience, that the buffalo will often lead us a long and fruitless chase with two or three ounce bullets through its body, when, if pinioned with an Indian's arrow, it would stand and submit to a second through its heart, bringing it to the ground.

Plate No. 8.

BUFFALO DANCE.

This grotesque group, though not strictly a hunting scene, is so closely allied as to be often considered by the Indians indispensable to their success; and consequently deemed by *me*, of importance here, in conveying to the reader a full account of buffalo hunting. Amongst a people so ignorant and superstitious, the success of their hunts and wars is often attributed to the strict observance of several propitiatory modes of singing and dancing to the Great (or other) Spirit; soliciting his countenance, and promising to give to him, (which they always do,) by sacrificing, the choicest pieces of the animal slain in their hunts. The wild and deafening songs sung on these occasions are exceedingly curious, and called Medicine (Mystery) Songs. All tribes have their medicine songs peculiar for the hunting of each animal they choose to go in pursuit of, and by singing these songs they conciliate the supposed invisible deity or spirit presiding over these animals' respective destinies, and who must necessarily be consulted in this way.

These Medicine Ceremonies, which are always conducted by their Medicine (or Mystery) Men, are almost invariably performed with more or less adherence to all the usual forms before starting on a hunting or war excursion; and however great the success may be, it is easily attributed to the observance of these forms; and if disappointment, or even disaster, attend the expedition, it is equally easy and convenient to attribute it to some culpable defect or omission in their Medicine operations.

For the purpose of buffalo-hunting nearly every wigwam, in most of the tribes, has one or more masks of the buffalo, (the skin of the animal's head, with the horns remaining on,) which the Indian places on his head when he is called upon to join in the Metai or Medicine, for buffalo hunting. When the hunters have arranged these masks upon their heads, they often sing and dance for days together before they get the permission to start, from their oracle, (the Doctor or Mystery Man,) and his guarantee for their success, which often depends much upon the degree of liberality with which they bestow the necessary presents upon him. To the same means, also, will they often resort in times of great scarcity; at seasons when the buffaloes seem to desert the vicinity of their villages, which is often the case, threatening them with hunger and starvation. The Doctors, in such emergencies, assemble together with the chiefs in consultation, and it is decided very gravely that the buffalo-dance must be